

## ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

The print head is scanned over a printed medium in a sub-scanning direction different from a direction in which the nozzles are arranged. The printing medium is conveyed by a predetermined amount  $K$  (where  $K = a \times L$  ( $a$  is a natural number and  $L$  is the size of the gradation patterns in the direction in which the nozzles are arranged) or  $K = L/b$  ( $b$  is a natural number)) in a direction in which the nozzles are arranged, between a preceding scan and a next scan of the print head. Correspondences between an image data and the plurality of nozzles are shifted in the direction in which the nozzles are arranged. The operated dot patterns are changed so as to allow the selective use of a plurality of different dot patterns indicating the same gradation value.